Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Office rejects: claim 4 under 35 USC § 103(a) over *Tsuruoka, et al.*(U.S. Patent 6,373,190 B1)in view of *Bongaerts, et al.* (U.S.Patent 5,596,431); claim 5 under 35 USC § 103(a) over *Tsuruoka, et al.* and *Bongaerts, et al* in view of *Asano, et al.* (U.S. Patent 6,353,288 B1); and claim 6 under 35 USC § 103(a) over *Tsuruoka, et al.* and *Bongaerts, et al.* in view of *French* (U.S. Patent 6,400,423 B1).

Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 4 is patentable over the cited references at least because *Tsuruoka, et al.* does not teach or suggest the patentable feature of claim 4 that "*...each* ***channel*** *comprises a sloping ramp (55) sloping from said bottom plane (I) to said plane (III) and ending in said peripheral part (50,51).*"

As shown in the embodiment of Figs. 3 and 5 of the application as filed, the sloping ramp 55 is the final portion of the channel 20. Immediately beside the part 54 the depth is D-D". The depth of the channel decreases towards the outer edge 57 of the peripheral part 51 becoming zero at the peripheral part. Because of the sloping ramp 55, the electrodes 30,31 can be to extend in the channels on the peripheral part smoothly, i.e., without having to overcome a step in height.

The applied reference to *Tsuruoka, et al.* discloses ribs 34 arranged in parallel with each other. The ribs 34 are joined at their lower part by the sheet-shaped joining element 35. As *Tsuruoka, et al.* teach, each **rib** 34 has a sloped shape in the end portion on the side of the terminals of the address electrodes. That is, the height of each rib 34 in the end portion is gradually reduced toward the side of the terminals

of the address electrodes. This makes transfer-printing from the portion of the joining element 35 on the side of the terminals 32 of the address electrodes smooth and stable. Please refer to Fig. 3 and column 4 lines 32-54 of *Tsuruoka, et al.* for support for these assertions.)

This is clearly different than the highlighted portion of claim 4. First, it is the **ribs** 34 of *Tsuruoka, et al.* that have a sloping end portion. There is no teaching or suggestion of **channels having a sloping portion** as is set forth in claim 4. Moreover, the applied reference further lacks a teaching or suggestion of the delimitation of the channels as having sloping ramps *sloping from said bottom plane (I) to said plane (III) and ending in said peripheral part (50,51)* as set forth in claim 4.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 4 is patentable over the applied reference to *Tsuruoka, et al.*

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 5, which depends from claim 4, is patentable over the cited references at least for the reasons set forth above. Additionally, it is respectfully submitted that neither *Tsuruoka, et al.* nor *Bongaerts, et al.* teach or suggest the patentable feature of claim 5 that "*... each longitudinal channel comprises a central part (52) having a first depth, flanked on one or both sides by a second portion (53) having a reduced depth, a third portion (54) having a depth corresponding to said first portion (52), bottoms of said first, second and third portions extending in said bottom plane (I); and a fourth portion comprising said sloping ramp (55)...*"

Before discussing differences between the applied art and claim 5, the undersigned requests clarification of an assertion in the Office Action. In particular, at page 3 the Office Action applies both the reference to *Tsuruoka, et al.* and the reference to *Bongaerts, et al.* The Office Action refers to Fig. 4, items 41 and 42 and column 5, lines 3-19, but does not state the whether it is *Tsuruoka, et al.* or *Bongaerts, et al.* that is being referenced. If it is a portion of the former patent that is referenced, Fig.4 illustrates a mold, which for reasons discussed in the response filed on January 9, 2003, is not germane to the claims under discussion. If the latter patent is being referenced it is respectfully submitted that the referenced portions do not teach the structure of claim 5 highlighted above.

For reasons similar to those discussed in detail above, it is clear that the reference to *Tsuruoka, et al.* lacks at least a teaching of the channels having a varying depth, as is specifically recited in claim 5. *Bongaerts, et al.* also lacks a teaching of the highlighted portion of claim 5. *Bongaerts, et al.* does teach the disposition of electrodes in channels, but does not teach the channels having a varying depth, as is specifically recited in claim 5. (Please refer to Figs. 2, 3 and 4; and column 4, line 63-column 6, line 52 of *Bongaerts, et al.* for support for these assertions.)

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 5 is patentable over the applied art.

Applicants respectfully submit that claim 6 is patentable over the applied art reference to *French*, at least because

French does not teach or suggest the patentable feature that "*...channels are provided by moving a grinding wheel or grinding wheels across said plate along a direction, said* ***grinding being*** *started at a* ***position away from an outer edge*** *(57) of said plate (36) and* ***being stopped before said grinding wheel reaches an opposite outer edge of said plate.***"

The reference to *French* is relied on for the teaching of channel forming by a grinding technique. While the channels of *French* may be formed by mechanical grinding, there is no teaching or suggestion in the reference of the commencement and termination of the grinding. More specifically, the quoted portions of the method of claim 6 are neither taught nor suggested in *French*. (Please refer to column 3, lines 24-25 and column 6, lines 6-24 of the reference to *French* for support for these assertions.)

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 6 is patentable over the applied art.

Finally, it is respectfully noted that Applicants in no way concede to the propriety of the combination of references set forth in the Office Action.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, applicant(s) respectfully request(s): the withdrawal of all objections and rejections of record; the allowance of all the pending claims; and the holding of the application in condition for allowance. If any points remain in issue that may best be resolved through a personal or telephonic interview, the Examiner is respectfully

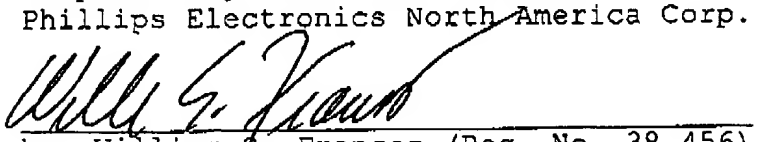
requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Except as otherwise stated in the previous Remarks, applicants note that each of the amendments have been made to place the claims in better form for U.S. practice or to clarify the meaning of the claims; not to distinguish the claims from prior art references, otherwise narrow the scope or comply with other statutory requirements. Moreover, Applicants reserve all rights they may have under the Doctrine of Equivalents.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and further replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account Number 50-0238 for any additional fees under 37 C.F.R. §1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. §1.17.

In the event that there are any outstanding matters remaining in the present application, the Examiner is invited to contact William S. Francos, Esq. (Reg. No. 38,456) at (610) 375-3513 to discuss these matters.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of:
Phillips Electronics North America Corp.



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